

Interracial News Service

A DIGEST OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

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CONSTRUCTIVE ACTIONS RE DESEGREGATION

So much has been written about resistance to school desegregation that it is important to present the other side of the picture. This issue is devoted to presenting the constructive action of many individuals, and religious groups throughout the South. A number of the actions reported here have had an impact in their local communities. However, their real significance lies in the fact that they are examples of an increasing trend in this direction on the part of many individuals and groups. *The editors are indebted to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith for their cooperation and aid in preparing this issue.*

IS IT WORTHWHILE TO ISSUE A STATEMENT

Atlanta Ministers' Manifesto

These are days of tremendous political and social tension throughout our entire world, but particularly in our nation and beloved Southland. The issues which we face are not simple, nor can they be resolved over night. Because the questions which confront us are in so many respects moral and spiritual as well as political, it is appropriate and necessary that men who occupy places of responsibility in the churches should not be silent concerning their convictions.

The signers of this statement are all ministers of the Gospel, but we speak also as citizens of Georgia and of the United States of America. We are all Southerners, either by birth or by choice, and speak as men who love the South, who seek to understand its problems, and who are vitally concerned for its welfare. In preparing this statement we have acted as individuals, and represent no one but ourselves. At the same time we believe that the sentiments which we express are shared by a multitude of our fellow-citizens, who are deeply troubled by our present situation and who know that hatred, defiance and violence are not the answer to our problems, but who have been without a voice and have found no way to make their influence effective.

In presenting our views for the consideration of others we can only speak in a spirit of deep humility and of penitence for our own failures. We can not claim that the problem of racial relationships has been solved even in the churches which we serve, and we are conscious that our own example in the matter of brotherhood and neighborliness has been all too imperfect. We do not pretend to know all the answers. We are of one mind, however, in believing that Christian people have an especial responsibility for the solution of our racial problems and that if, as Christians, we sincerely seek to understand and apply the teachings of our Lord and Master we shall assuredly find the answer. . . .

We believe that the difficulties before us have been greatly increased by extreme attitudes and statements on both sides. . . . We do believe that all Americans, whether black or white, have a right to the full privileges of first class citizenship. To suggest that a recognition of the rights of Negroes to the full privileges of American citizenship, and to such necessary contacts as might follow would inevitably result in intermarriage is to cast as serious and unjustified an aspersion upon the White races as upon the Negro race. Believing as we do in the desirability of preserving the integrity of both races through the free choice of both, we would emphasize the following principles which we hold to be of basic importance for our thought and conduct:

1. Freedom Of Speech Must At All Costs Be Preserved. . . .
2. As Americans And As Christians We Have An Obligation To Obey The Law. . . .
3. The Public School System Must Not Be Destroyed. . . .
4. Hatred And Scorn For Those Of Another Race, Or For Those Who Hold A Position Different From Our Own, Can Never Be Justified. . . .
5. Communication Between Responsible Leaders Of The Races Must Be Maintained. . . .
6. Our Difficulties Cannot Be Solved In Our Own Strength Or In Human Wisdom. . . .



Reactions to Atlanta Ministers' Manifesto

Thoughtful people in all walks of life in the United States are deeply concerned about growing racial tensions, which are dividing our people and dissipating our strength at home and abroad. The Church has never had a greater opportunity than it has today to show its greatness, to be a conscience to the people and to speak the truth of love.

In the face of this challenge and of this need, 80 ministers from Atlanta, Georgia, signed their names to a statement which set forth their convictions on the racial question. Known as "The Atlanta Manifesto," the statement has had wide coverage in the press, on radio and TV, in national magazines and in both independent and interdenominational church publications.

The "Manifesto" speaks for itself. The 1,300-word document was written by Dr. J. MacDowell Richards, president of Columbia Theological Seminary. It was signed by 80 clergymen. . . .

What have been the reactions in the congregations of the ministers who signed the "Manifesto?" They have, according to my information, been few and minor. There have been conversations, but in almost every instance these were opportunities to discuss the problem with an understanding sympathy and outlook. . . .

A sampling of my mail indicates that there are those who believe that the Church should not be involved in social issues; that ministers should preach the Gospel and not meddle in politics. A few writers hinted that the "Manifesto" signers were tinged with socialistic and communistic teachings. Much mimeographed material, attempting to prove that segregation is taught in the Bible, was received. Many of the letters were — in my judgment — un-Christian in both attitude and thought.

Ninety per cent of my correspondence, however, was favorable, with sincere appreciation expressed to the signers of the "Manifesto." I heard from college and university presidents, public school principals, ministers — including both secretaries and Church administrators, newspapermen, business executives, lawyers, civic and welfare leaders, college and ministerial students, women church leaders, government officials, overseas missionaries, and parents.

These correspondents were more than generous in their statements. They wrote: ". . . excellent statement," ". . . a breath of fresh air over the South," ". . . well balanced and Christian," ". . . you are on God's side."

The most encouraging words to come to my desk were contained in a letter from a Baptist missionary in Nigeria. He said in part: "As a white missionary from Alabama to Nigeria,

West Africa, I have been living under a cloud of confusion ever since the Little Rock incident. My heart has been troubled. I have watched eagerly for weeks for some sign that Christians would speak out against the terrible wrongs being committed against the Negro in the United States. I have faced the question, searchingly, what justification is there for me to be in Africa to preach the Gospel when conditions are as they are in America? I knew there were individuals who felt as I did. But I hardly dared hope that out of Atlanta would come a Voice in the Wilderness! Out of a sense of deep and lasting gratitude to God, I write to say "Thank you!" for the courage, conviction, and Christian grace you and your fellow ministers have shown in forming your statement for the public. I know, and many of you now know, the deep sense of peace that comes when one sees the truth, declares himself for it regardless of the cost. Now each of you will preach the gospel with more power and effect than ever before. Others will follow your example. I can only say, may God bless you each one." It is enough.

(Article by Rev. Herman L. Turner, appearing in *MONDAY MORNING*, February 17)

Seventeen professors of Emory University's Candler School of Theology, acting individually and not as a group, endorsed the manifesto on race relations issued by 80 Atlanta ministers. In a letter released Saturday, February 1, 1958, the 17 professors said: "While we have individually expressed our appreciation for the courageous leadership which the 80 Atlanta ministers exemplified in the statement of principles which they issued, we wish to take this means of showing our support and encouragement of the positions which it represents.

"In the hope that the wide support which it has received may be useful both in stemming the tide of fear, intimidation and lawlessness and in providing a basis for positive steps toward the achievement of justice and brotherhood, we hereby endorse the declaration of principles which this group made.

"Although we recognize the limitations of statements of policy and pronouncements in general, we believe that this particular declaration helped immeasurably to meet a genuine need. We believe it to be quite moderate, and we hope that it is viewed as only a step toward the discharge of the Church's continuing responsibility in the area of race relations."

* * *

Thirty-three ministers of Columbus, Georgia joined the Atlanta ministers in adopting the manifesto.

* * *

It is reported that in Atlanta, lines of communication are being kept open and that monthly conferences are being held with a small group of clergymen of both races.

The *Kentucky Council Quarterly* states that the Executive Board of the Kentucky Council of Churches, on January 8th, passed a motion endorsing the statement issued by the 80 Atlanta ministers.

The Jewish community demonstrated its support of the Atlanta Manifesto when the Southern Regional Board of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith presented the signatories with a special award at a dinner held in their honor. (Ed.)

MINISTERS' CONFERENCES

302 White Ministers, Dallas, Tex.

... We recognize that there are honest differences of opinion among sincere people concerning desegregation in the public schools. One of the most prized possessions of a free society, however, is the right to discuss differences openly. We are certain that thoughtful citizens, although they may differ in their views on the race question, agree that these differences can be resolved only by following democratic principles, such as respect for the rights of individuals, free speech and due process of law through the courts, without recourse to violence and lawlessness.

All of this leads us to the conviction that enforced segregation is morally and spiritually wrong, and in light of these beliefs we present the following principles:

1. These problems can be solved only as people seek God's help. We should seek not to justify our own views in His sight, but to obtain His guidance in all our actions. We urge that people of all faiths pray earnestly that God will give understanding, patience and guidance in meeting these social issues.

2. Law and order must be maintained as Dallas faces desegregation

of its public schools. The Supreme Court has ruled that segregation in the public schools on the basis of race is unconstitutional. The lower Federal Courts will inform Dallas about local application of this decision. Their rulings will be the law, and must be respected. Individuals or groups defy court decisions, they are inviting anarchy in which no one's rights will be preserved. We urge that all citizens encourage and support the declared intention of city officials and law enforcement agencies to see that law and order are maintained in Dallas.

3. Churches, service clubs and community organizations, newspapers, radio and television have a responsibility to aid in the solution of this problem. We urge that these groups and enterprises join together in seeking actively to promote the spirit of harmony and peace among all people, both by aiding forces of order and goodwill, and by discouraging destructive actions.

4. The citizens of Dallas have a responsibility to assist the School Boards as they attempt to lead the community. In order that the School Boards may have the understanding support of the community in desegregating the public schools, we urge that plans be made public as soon as possible.

5. Christian parents can be of great help in creating proper attitudes toward race. We urge that all parents, by conversation and example, set a pattern of responsible Christian citizenship in a democracy which recognizes justice, fair-play and respect for the sacredness of human personality.

6. The exchange of views among people of different races is necessary for a reasonable solution to the problem. We urge that religious, civic and educational groups of all races seek to understand each other by a free interchange of ideas and opinions in order that there may be a full confidence and cooperation in arriving at solutions.

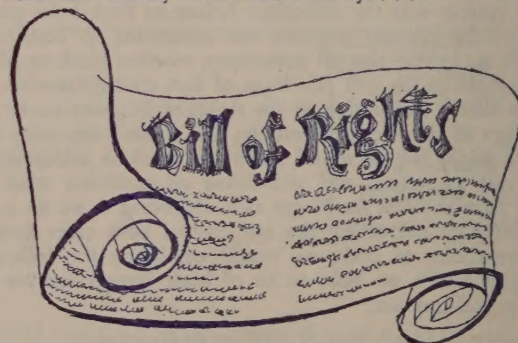
112 Negro Ministers, Dallas, Tex.

... While we heartily commend the creative efforts of many of our citizens in the whole area of social problems, we must publicly condemn segregation and stratification. It, we feel, is our task, shared by every true Christian, to seek to bring the power of the word of God to bear upon individuals, thereby changing their hearts and enriching their lives.

If we can speak for a people given to us to lead, a people who come to us with their problems and confidences, the following should be said: ...

What the Negro Wants

1. *No special privilege.* Merely the rights of first class American citizenship in all aspects.
2. *To be respected as a person* — not a race. Christianity and democracy both teach this.
3. *To live in a truly free society* — to be released from the terrifically harsh effects of segregation — to live in an atmosphere where there is opportunity for mutual confession, understanding, forgiveness, and love for fellowman.
4. *Services rendered in his behalf*, as should be true for all citizens to be based upon deeper values than purely humanitarian philanthropy and paternalism.
5. *His differences to be neither ignored nor accentuated.*
6. *Unity in diversity.* America is a diversified country. The Negro wants to be accepted in terms of the American culture and wishes to play his part along with others in making America a strong cosmopolitan nation.
7. *Unity on equal terms* — not of superiors dominating over or condescending to inferiors.
8. *The right to live and find free expression of his native endowment as an individual.* This involves the whole realm of equality in political and economic rights, which include job opportunities, schooling, public conveniences, etc.
9. "To be a brother and not a brother-in-law." He wants to have sense of belonging to a total citizenry.
10. Peace and harmony in an ordered society. ...



FROM A DIARY

Henderson, Kentucky is located six miles north of the Mason-Dixon Line and is near both Sturgis and Clay, where mobs prevented school integration in September, 1956.

Shortly before the time for the opening of school it became known that the White Citizens Council was sponsoring a mass meeting about segregation. The ministers of the Henderson County Ministerial Association called a meeting of the association

tion and decided to attend the mass meeting as a group to make a statement of rebuttal. The ministers sat as a group at the mass meeting and listened as the White Citizens Council leader demanded a school boycott. After some difficulty getting permission to speak, the president of the ministerial association read the association's statement to the crowd, estimated at 1,500. The statement counselled them to keep cool heads and calm emotions and urged the people to implement the Supreme Court's decision. Before the president reached the end of the statement, boos, hisses and uncomplimentary remarks drowned him out. However, the meeting broke up without any council petitions being signed.

On the Sunday following the mass meeting, attendance at several churches was at an all-time low. There had been talk of boycotting the churches as well as the schools.

On Monday morning, the boycott began at Weaverton School. Out of a total of 863 pupils enrolled, only 300 (5 of them Negro) attended school. A mob gathered at the school.

Soon after school began, the president of the ministerial association, in a regular fifteen-minute broadcast — spoke of the Henderson situation. The association also began spot announcements at strategic hours urging parents to keep their children in school.

The White Citizens Council called another mass meeting. School attendance dropped more on the second day and the ministerial association contacted parents who were keeping their children in school, and invited them to a meeting with the ministers. 70 mothers and fathers attended; also the school superintendent and the police commissioner, who reassured the parents of the children's safety.

The next day school attendance increased considerably. The White Citizens Council leader was so surprised at this that he demanded a recount; then found the number in attendance to be two higher than the original count.

White Citizens Councils then got sound trucks and went throughout the city urging parents to keep their children out of school.

The ministerial association increased their broadcasts and began newspaper advertisements. They attempted to correct the distortions about the NAACP. They called another meeting of ministers and parents.

The psychological destructiveness inherent in the situation now became evident. Some of the children were quite emotionally upset. It wasn't integration that bothered them, but the absence of so many fellow pupils and the presence of the mob, plus the blaring of the sound trucks confused them. There was confusion among adults too.

On the fourth day, school attendance jumped again. The sound trucks continued their propaganda and the ministerial association continued its broadcasts.

On that evening about 50 parents met in the E. and R. church. Police Chief Fred J. Halle was on hand again. A fine experience of sharing and witnessing uplifted all who were present. After prayer there was a fellowship hour, with coffee and cookies supplied by the ministerial association.

On the fifth day the increase in school attendance discouraged the Citizens Council, but they were not defeated. They then embarked on a telephone crusade. The ministers continued the spot radio announcements, although their financial reserves were almost completely drained.

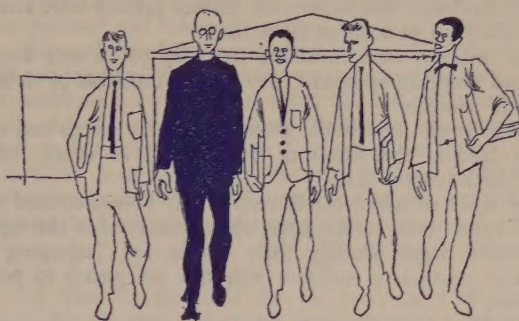
On this same day, the state attorney general announced his ruling that no school which had begun integration can stop the process. Then the acting commissioner of public safety called a meeting of the officers of the Citizens Council, the president of the ministerial association, the chief of police and representatives of the press and television. Council leaders were advised that they would be held personally responsible for any violence and it was suggested that they end the boycott and consider legal means.

The White Citizens Council held another mass meeting, but they were clearly losing strength and unity. In fact, they were in open disagreement.

The ministers' united stand had begun to weaken. Several of our group suggest that the association's militant, aggressive approach be slowed down to let things ride for a while. Each pastor had been under tremendous pressure from his own congregation.

Throughout the embattled week or more, the ministerial association received not one single token of support from any civic group, chamber of commerce, businessman, church lay leader or public school official. "How can civic welfare be upheld when the responsibility for it is not shared?" . . .

(Henderson Pastors' Diary by C. Sumpter Logan and Theodore A. Braun, Oct. 24, 1956)



INDIVIDUALS ACT

The Clergy Act

One Pastor in Clinton

In December, 1956, Clinton, Tennessee was perhaps the most widely known small town in the world. For the second time in three months it had experienced mob rule. . . .

After order was restored to the community the segregationist agitators, encouraged and led by New Jersey segregationist John Kasper, engaged in a program of harrassment and violence directed primarily at the Negro children and school principal, D. J. Brittain.

In late November the Negro children could stand no more. They decided to remain at home until some protection could be offered. Kasper had been acquitted by a local court of charges of inciting to riot. This victory, plus the tension accompanying a city election, had resulted in renewed strength and activity for the segregationists. The White Citizens Council working outside the school and Tennessee White Youth — a sort of teenagers' auxiliary — abusing and threatening the Negro students inside left little encouragement.

On December 3, the Reverend Paul Turner, pastor of Clinton's First Baptist Church, did what was to prove the turning point in the Clinton crisis and what saved face for American Christians throughout the world. The ministers had played their role in the controversy quietly or not at all until that time.

That morning the Reverend Mr. Turner, accompanied by 3 civic leaders and members of his congregation accompanied the Negro children from their homes to the school. They were jeered and heckled as they passed through the crowd. All the way down the long hill leading from the residential area to the school Mr. Turner kept repeating to the children, "Don't be afraid, no one is going to hurt you, don't be afraid."

More than a score of persons followed Mr. Turner as he left the school. As he reached the middle of the street opposite the courthouse, about two blocks away, four or five men grabbed at him.

At that point the Reverend Mr. Turner was attacked and beaten about the face and head and police arrived in time to prevent serious injury.

Perhaps the best explanation for the minister's act came from his wife.

"Paul felt the time had come to do something on this — and I know he had thought about it very carefully and believed in it thoroughly."

"He felt it was his responsibility," she said. "We've had this tension too long."

Mr. Turner put it this way:

Referring to the New Testament, he said: "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed." . . .

It is difficult to determine the exact effect of such an act. However, a number of events followed too closely to have been unrelated.

A slate of officers endorsed by the White Citizens Council was defeated by a margin of three to one. Most observers credited Mr. Turner's act with getting out the record vote.

While there had been apathy and fear earlier many rallied to the support of the minister and those who had remained silent spoke.

This dramatic act brought national sentiment to bear on both federal and state authorities. Sixteen persons were arrested for violating a permanent injunction.

The children were informed that city police and sheriff's deputies would be on hand . . . to prevent incidents of violence. dents of violence.

Ministers and ministerial groups in nearby towns and cities began lauding the action of Turner and in effect "taking sides" in the controversy.

The result of which the Reverend Mr. Turner seemed most proud came some weeks later when missionaries throughout the world began sending their thanks for "salvaging the Christian missionary endeavor wherever we preach to people of color."

Rabbi Takes A Stand

There is now under way a reappraisal by Southern Jews of their attitudes on the integration issue. A number of Jews despite their sympathy with desegregation have thought it prudent to maintain silence about the issue and not risk the possible loss of social and economic status. . . .

Such Jews not only feel it necessary to take refuge in silence on the integration question but also seek to impose such silence upon their rabbis and even upon national Jewish organizations. They contend that any word or deed expressing approval of integration from any Jewish source will identify the Jew with the cause of the Negro and thus expose him to reprisals.

Now this attitude is being questioned on two major counts. At a recent meeting . . . Jewish leaders from some twenty southern communities discussed the question of the morality of such a stand and whether it actually serves the purpose of protecting the Jew. Several rabbis in the South have apparently been convinced that the answer to this question is clear. They have been speaking out in favor of integration in the face of much criticism. . . .

Rabbi William B. Silverman of Nashville, Tennessee, (whose synagogue center was bombed, nevertheless remains) particularly frank and outspoken in denouncing this retreat of Jews into silence. He recently wrote that "some Jews in Nashville deluded themselves into thinking that if we were ideologically neutral and morally quiescent, we would escape the vilification, the calumny and abuse of the hatemongers. They were mistaken." . . .

In his challenge to the adherents of the "silence policy," Rabbi Silverman has also raised the question of whether such silence comports with the traditions of Judaism. In a High Holy Day sermon he . . . appealed to all Jews to act affirmatively in the present crisis of the South:

If we are to be true to our heritage of prophetic Judaism, then not only we in Nashville, but every congregation must stand and be counted. We should live by our faith and implement the moral ideals of social justice taught to us by the prophets of Israel. Much more is involved than attacks upon the Negro. The Negro is the initial target in the mobilization of the bigots for warfare against moral and spiritual values. The ultimate objective is to attack the principles and precepts of the Judeo-Christian way of life. There is a time when silence is cowardly. There is a time when our faith must commit us to moral action. Now is such a time.

Rabbi Silverman has not shrunk from putting his moral ideals and concepts of social justice into practice. More than a year and a half ago, he invited a Negro to occupy his pulpit and followed this with an invitation to the entire Negro community of Nashville to join in prayer with members of his own congregation. Dr. Charles Johnson, then president of Fisk University, delivered the sermon. Among the guests who attended the services and enjoyed the hospitality of the congregation afterward were 110 Negroes. . . .

Last March, at Rabbi Silverman's suggestion, the sisterhood of his temple conducted a Passover Institute, non-segregated, for the Christian clergy. Ninety of the 250 ministers who attended were Negroes. . . . There followed through the year discussion programs in the sisterhood and the youth groups. To these were invited members of other faiths, both white and Negro, and the results were heartening. . . . Encouraged by these programs, Rabbi Silverman approached Governor Frank

Clement to enlist his aid in the formation of a State Commission on Human Relations. Unfortunately, Rabbi Silverman was unable to induce state authorities to establish such a commission.

He called together key members of the Nashville community — business and professional men, clergymen, editors and educators. From this meeting the Nashville Community Relations Conference was born. At this meeting it was agreed that "there should be adequate preparation and an effective organization made up of all segments of the community, to strengthen the hands of the school board." The group outlined plans for a full educational program, including a speaker's bureau which would send representatives to schools, service clubs and civic organizations "to prepare a favorable climate for the implementation of integration." It was at this time that Kasper invaded the scene. Rabbi Silverman reports what happened:

. . . The White Citizens Councils came in; the Tennessee Committee for Constitutional Government, a very weak group, circulated petitions. . . . As soon as Kasper came to Nashville our community was flooded with anti-Semitic literature, and with the assistance of a renegade minister, the crowds were incited to cat-calls, invective, the throwing of stones, etc.

These disturbing phenomena, capped by the bombing of the Hattie Cotton school, impelled Rabbi Silverman and other community leaders to press for strong and immediate community action which would ward off any further dangers. They approached the *Nashville Tennessean* and expressed their feelings to the editor. If a school could be bombed and the crowds so incited by a handful of people, they pointed out, the churches and synagogues might well come next in this surge of mob violence. The editor was sympathetic and his paper condemned the wave of racial and religious hatred. Priests, ministers, professionals, businessmen and educators also joined in the effort to stem the tide of violence and agitation. They spoke out against the agitators, and the ministerial association passed a resolution condemning the violence. . . .

(Article by Ruth Silberstein in *The Congress Weekly*, January 20)

(Although Rabbi Silverman's life has been threatened and his synagogue center bombed, he has not receded from his courageous stand and thereby, he has won the full support of his congregation and many southern Jews. — Ed.)



Brother Dan and the Klan

Sylacauga, Alabama is little different from other South Alabama towns. Its economy is farming; it has a large Negro population; it has a long history of Ku Klux Klan activity; and a lot of people are afraid. But some don't scare easily. One such is the Reverend Dan Whitsett, pastor of Sylacauga's large First Methodist Church.

A few years ago when a cross was burned on the lawn of the church, Mr. Whitsett announced that he would conduct an evening worship service around a cross of love erected in the same spot and invited parishioners to join him in placing lighted crosses in their windows as a symbol of God's love instead of man's hate. When publicity threatened to make a spectacle of the service, Brother Dan, as he is affectionately known by his friends, changed the plan but his message was clear.

Because he has never compromised his convictions where true brotherhood is concerned and because he has seen to it that his position is well known, the Reverend Mr. Whitsett has been a perennial target of Alabama racists. His life and family have been threatened numerous times.

Several months ago, a cross was burned in front of the church. Though the act itself is fairly common, this time the Reverend Newton Malony, associate minister at the church, was conducting a youth service inside. Mr. Malony walked across the street and kicked over the cross and extinguished the flames. He also briefly blocked the departure of a car occupied by Klansmen.

Later in the evening an unidentified caller warned his wife that unless the Malonys and Whitsetts were out of town within ten days, "your house and child will be blown to bits."

The Malonys have a 1½ year old baby.

Ten days later both ministers were busily engaged in a church revival with no plans for departing.

Apparently the Bishop concurred. Mr. Whitsett was reappointed to Sylacauga at annual conference.

The witness of this man has not been lost in Alabama. Many have disagreed and it is doubtful if he would win a popularity contest but few prophets of the Lord have.

But those who are most critical of him are forced by his words and acts to reexamine their position as they defend it.

Other ministers have been brought to take a stand when they could no longer tolerate the abuse heaped upon their colleague.

Following the threat cited above the Sylacauga Ministerial Association condemned "cross burning and intimidation" and urged residents to move against such outbreaks of violence.

The next day the mayor accepted their challenge and ordered the police chief to seek evidence to authorize arrest.

Though there has been no dramatic reversal of attitudes resulting from Mr. Whitsett's witness, his forthright courage and action have taken from the Klan much of their support.

LAY PEOPLE ACT

"South Carolinians Speak"

The Supreme Court decision regarding the elimination of racial segregation from the public schools, was hailed by all the world as a signal step toward the achievement of fuller opportunity for all people in the nation. Then the reaction set in. The violence at Clinton, Little Rock and Nashville, in fact, every resistance to the decision became worldwide news.

One of the results of the reactions has been fear on the part of many people to express their true convictions about the merits of moving from segregated schools to nonsegregated schools. In many places, one of the basic of American rights — the freedom of speech — is threatened. In this climate of opinion, not only has communication between the races virtually stopped, but many white people in the South are afraid to express their true thoughts about the issue to each other.

South Carolinians Speak is significant because twelve of South Carolina's respected white citizens, all of them active church people, have courageously expressed as individuals their firm convictions about the crisis in race relations. Designed primarily for use in South Carolina, the book serves the purpose of communicating ideas on this issue which is a necessary step in moving toward the solution of a problem. It is also an important contribution to preserving the freedom of expression. According to reports, at least 15,000 copies of the book have been distributed within the State and hundreds of supporting letters have been received from South Carolina.

Even though the contributors have varying positions about the issue of segregation, all of them are troubled about the present impasse in race relations in South Carolina. One or two of these writers see little possibility of changing the situation. One or two others recognize that this is a moral and spiritual problem and point out that racial segregation is contradictory to Christian principles. Others recognize that present social conditions as well as the climate of national and world opinion make change inevitable. Several of the writers urge that if our free society is to be conserved, this change in the pattern of race relations must take place in an orderly manner, in accordance with the law of the land on a democratic and Christian basis. They recognize that the problem is more than a regional one to be dealt with by the South alone. Rather they see it in the context of a situation which affects the welfare of the nation as a whole.

Quotations from some of the contributors follow:

... Ultimately all South Carolinians are going to have to decide which they love more: Their children or their prejudices; a government by law or a government by mob terror; American democracy, rooted in Christian principles and the Bill of Rights, or the discredited doctrine of inherent racial superiority.

Responsible citizens should discourage profane attacks on the integrity of the U. S. Supreme Court, inflammatory talk and political demagogery, economic and social boycott and

reprisal. They should work for the repeal of repressive state legislative acts which deny civil rights to any of our citizens, regardless of race; and they should strive to reopen the lines of communication between the races, so that a solution to our mutual problems may be reached in an atmosphere of reason and good will.

Andrew McDowd Secrest, Cheraw, S. C.

* * *

... We can be thankful that the Negroes have generally shown patience and tolerance in their march toward first-class citizenship and that they have not had leadership of the violent, rabble-rousing type often seen among the segregationists. There is no justification for the charge that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is Communist-controlled, or that it is forced upon Negroes of the South. . . .

All of us must remember that the final solution of our problem lies in the hearts and minds of men of good will who believe in the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God.

John Clyde Barrington, Dillon, S. C.

* * *

... I want for my child and for every child of God the right to lift his eyes and to say within himself, "There is a place for me in America, in South Carolina if I choose. There is work for my hands and brain. There is happiness and achievement waiting for me if I am true to the best that is within me." I do not want the color of his skin to kill that dream or a lack of educational opportunity to place chains upon his spirit more terrible than the iron chains that shackled the limbs of his forebears.

Claudia Thomas Sanders, Gaffney, S. C.

* * *

... I do not believe that all men are created equal, or can become equal; but I do believe that in the United States today all people are born equal in their rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and that law and government must recognize the equal claim of everybody to these rights; and I hold that there should be no legal barrier to prevent any man from rising to the position that others are entitled to attain. I believe that high function should go with high faculty, and that reward should be according to merit; and I hold that under law no man should have any advantage over another save that given him by his own mental, moral, or physical superiority. I have the conviction that supremacy which is not based on superiority is intrinsically wrong, and I know that superiority of individuals does not go by race. I accept "Equal rights for all, special privileges for none" and "Fair field and no favor under law and government" as fundamental principles of American democracy, and I accept them without reservations.

John W. Moore, Mt. Pleasant, S. C.

"HATE MAIL"

Religious and civic leaders here sent a letter to Arlington high school seniors designed to counteract repeated "hate mail" which the students have received from racial segregationist groups.

The letter, signed by nine Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish leaders, urged the students to learn to "think for themselves" and recognize the danger which prejudice poses to a democracy.

"Dear Senior," the letter said, "Since you have during this year received through the mails certain controversial materials from outside sources, some of them anonymous, we are prompted to call attention to the distorted character of much of this material and to the dangers implicit in the approach it represents.

"We do not propose to engage in a battle with anyone for the minds of the students. Rather we have confidence . . . in the ethical and religious influences of your family and church life and in your ability to think for yourself."

The letter pointed out that racial prejudice is much older and more deep-seated than the heated controversies over integration of recent months in the state of Virginia. It warned the students that "prejudice, whether racial, religious or social, has long been recognized as a problem which must be dealt with constructively if our democratic society is to survive and fulfill its own principles."

"We have a deep concern for maintaining a good community in which we can live together in mutual harmony and respect," the community leaders said. They added that they deplored the action of those groups which "instead of promoting this spirit, encourage attitudes of hatred and passion."

The letter challenged students, as individuals or as leaders of their groups, to "stand up for human decency, fair play and respect for law." It assured them they would have the support of all "thoughtful fellow citizens."

"Any of the individuals undersigned, who collectively represent a broad section of religious leadership, would be glad to assist you at any time," the letter concluded, "to find helpful reference materials in the area of human relations, moral teachings, constitutional law and science." . . .

(*Religious News Service*, January 13)



THE ROLE OF CHRISTIAN YOUTH IN SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

On the first complete day of school integration in Little Rock, Terrance Roberts sat alone in the midst of a taunting, tense Central High cafeteria. Ken Reinhardt, a young white student, overwhelmed with guilt over the day-long exhibition of cursing and jeering by his fellow students and feeling compelled to express at least a minimum of common courtesy, took his tray over, introduced himself and asked permission to sit down. . . .

On the national level, and in Southern regions, denominational youth fellowships and interdenominational youth councils have waged a battle of ideas through numerous pronouncements, resolutions, letters to the President and congressional committees, urging immediate action to speed the course of racial justice in schools, housing, employment. . . . Texas, North Carolina, and Georgia youth councils have published statements to this effect and to date no denominational judiciary above the state level has been able to pass resolutions in opposition to the Supreme Court decisions, though an often rabid minority has occasionally attempted such.

Economic reprisal, the "firing" of liberal clergymen and social ostracism and violence toward youth who attempt to express their Christian convictions have made a united witness by the churches in a local community exceedingly difficult.

The continuous harrassment of Southern Christians, the misquoting of sermons, the exaggeration of petty weaknesses, checking of correspondence — even stealing recently used carbon paper in an attempt to find any bit of "heresy" — misconduct, or secondary reasons for persecution, make the lot of Southern churchmen very difficult. They have never before been challenged with the possibility of martyrdom as the price of conviction. The challenge is further complicated by the imperative to mediate the transforming love of God to those who are, by virtue of their social, psychic, and spiritual need, the vociferous and violent racists.

In spite of the institutional hindrances and personal threats in some quarters, there is an organized attempt to aid school desegregation within the framework of the churches. There has been an extraordinary amount of attention and emphasis given to the whole area of Christ, the Church and Race through denominational study courses. Interdenominational youth councils in Houston, Chattanooga, Little Rock, Raleigh, Atlanta, Charlottesville, and many other smaller cities of the South are providing perhaps the only opportunity which youth have for interracial fellowship and to discuss pending issues. Though the overt actions of these groups are negligible, they are building a core of individuals committed to each other as brothers. This is the way youth groups change a community, thereby creating a climate favorable to desegregation by changing lives. A Southern minister observed:

"When schools are desegregated in this town it will be done peacefully. These kids already know each other."

Only recently one city anticipating the decision of the courts to desegregate this fall, scheduled an interdenominational rally in which some 500 youths and their adult advisers demonstrated silently through interracial fellowship and worship, the insignificance of race and their common heritage as Christians. . . . Through this local youth council the churches are projecting a continuous program of education and preparation.

In eighteen training conferences across the country, the United Christian Youth Movement will involve the leaders of our denominational and youth council programs in workshops preparing them to deal with the problems of their communities. The means of dealing with the problems of school desegregation will occupy a significant part of each of these conferences in the South. Special preparations have been made to have represented in these conferences, the youth church fellowship officers of communities facing integration. This will provide a ten-day interracial living experience and an occasion to anticipate their difficulties. A similar pilot conference is being sponsored by a local council of churches and the United Christian Youth Movement, involving key youth of all the churches in a Southern city. It is anticipated that similar projects will be conducted in other cities.

The church youth of Little Rock took part in several one-day interracial work camps before Central High School was integrated. These experiences continued through the summer and averaged twenty participants each Saturday, who engaged in work projects and discussions at a neighboring church camp.

These are but a few of the stammering attempts of a chastened church to heal and prevent further wounds such as those in Little Rock and Charlotte. Admittedly we are not prepared to deal with the community power structure in decisive fashion. Nor are we accustomed to the role of "suffering servant." We have too long been "at ease in Zion." It will take time to completely rid the institution of the deadening acculturation which hampers it, but a growing "remnant" is at work in society seeking to redeem and renew in the framework of the total witness of the church.

(Prepared by the *Rev. Andrew Young*, United Christian Youth Movement, National Council of Churches)

THE BIBLE AND RACE THE NEW TESTAMENT ON RACE

By GUY H. RANSON

People who are both Southerners and Christians are facing a real problem. Our social customs tell us that white people are superior to Negroes and that Negroes must be kept in a subordinate position. The New Testament tells us that there is unity of men in Christ and that all men must be given equal opportunities and treated as brothers in Christ. Where is such taught in the New Testament?

Jesus On Race

The matter of race relations in Jesus' day was a part of a complex problem as it is in our day. The Jews felt that they were superior to the Gentiles and the Greeks felt that they were superior to Barbarians. Would Jesus take sides? No. He had a solution. He said that men were to love one another as God loved them. This love was no mere sentiment but action to redeem. We cannot claim, therefore, to love men unless we seek justice for all races. Justice demands that all people be given equal opportunities for education, self-direction in political affairs, spiritual development, and all such things as belong to both inner development and external comforts.

In the parable of the lord of the vineyard and the unjust husbandmen, Jesus teaches that feelings of pride in a person or group will exclude that person or group from the kingdom of God. (Matt. 21:23 — 22:14; Mark 11:27 — 12:12; Luke 20:1-19)

Jesus often deliberately brought up the question of race, and he repeatedly demonstrated the good qualities of despised groups. It was on the occasion of some Greeks asking to see Jesus that he gave the teaching that it would be by his being raised on the cross that he would draw all men unto himself (John 12:20-36). This seems to mean that there is unity among men who are drawn to Christ. . . .

In the story of the "Good Samaritan" Jesus showed that a despised half-breed understood love better than the official religious teachers of the Jews (Luke 10:25-37). What he showed the lawyer was that one who seeks to love some people

and ignore others has no understanding of his message of salvation. When one knows Christ he forgets race and loves every man.

Paul On Race

The apostle Paul understood the gospel of Christ to break down pride of race and to establish equality among men. He tells the Galatians (3:27-28) that there is "neither Jew nor Greek" among those "baptized unto Christ" because "all are one in Christ Jesus." He understands this to mean that Jews and Greeks are social equals, and therefore, Cephas "stood condemned" for refusing to eat with the Greeks (Gal. 2:11-21). Paul tells the Ephesians (2:13-16) that the sacrifice of Christ has made Jew and Greek "both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility . . . that he might create in himself one new man in place of two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross." This means that to accept the atonement of Christ is also to accept all men as members of the church of Christ.

Paul tells the Athenians (Acts 17:26-8) that God "made from one every nation of men . . . and 'In him we live and move and have our being.'" Here Paul shows the Christian basis of unity of men to be superior to the Stoic basis of equality of men. He tells the Philippians (2:3-8) to have "this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who . . . emptied himself, taking the form of a servant . . . being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross." Paul says that this means that they "Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves." He tells the Corinthians (1 Cor. 12) that all members of the body of Christ, the community of the reconciled, are members one of another, mutually dependent and helpful.

When we Christians understand these teachings of the New Testament, we know that we must listen to God rather than to men (Acts 4:19). We know also that some people will be displeased, but we must heed the injunction, "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God" (Romans 12:2). We must be sustained by our Lord's promise, "In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

THE BIBLE SPEAKS ON SEGREGATION

By RABBI ARTHUR GILBERT

. . . The Old Testament passages which are used to support the principles of segregation are few, but the inferences drawn from them have been widely circulated. I would like to examine the most commonly uttered charges of the "religious" segregationists and explain the Biblical passages which they quote, in the light of authentic and traditional rabbinic interpretations. My sources are the Midrash, an ancient homiletical exposition of the Scriptures, and Rashi, the classic 11th century interpreter of the Holy Book. The revered rabbis and sages who authored these explanations wrote many centuries before present-day segregationists thought of using the Bible to buttress their views, yet their classic writings stand as eloquent refutation of pro-segregationist arguments.

CHARGE: The sign placed upon Cain as the mark of his punishment was the color black. The Negro race, therefore, calls to mind the man who was an outcast of God and society.

ANSWER: According to Jewish tradition, God "engraved on Cain's forehead a letter of His holy name." God did this out of compassion for Cain. The sign had nothing to do with skin coloration, but was the seal of God, and it was placed upon Cain not as a symbol of his degradation, but in order to assist him. According to rabbinic authority, "Cain complained, 'Until now the fear of men was upon all beasts,' as it is written in Genesis 2:9 (and the fear of you shall be upon every beast). 'Now, however, on account of the sin the beasts will no longer fear me and they will kill me.' Immediately the Lord set a sign for Cain. He returned the fear of him upon the beasts." (Rashi)

Cain's punishment was not that a sign was placed on his forehead, but that his sin alienated him from God and made him an outcast among men. The story in no way refers to the Negro race.

CHARGE: Ham, one of Noah's sons, from whom the colored races are descended, was condemned by God to become a slave of slaves.

ANSWER: A careful reading of the text, Genesis 9:20-25, reveals that the curse was pronounced by Noah, who arose from a drunken sleep and cursed his youngest son who had seen him in his nakedness. The curse was not pronounced by God.

Four peoples were descended from Ham, (Genesis 10:6) and only one of these was Negroid. The curse, therefore, cannot be said to rest upon only one racial group, unless the person who is making such a charge is seeking justification for a prior bias.

The four sons of Ham were: Canaan, and the Canaanites were white tribes, every one of them; Egypt, certainly not a people condemned to perpetual servitude; Cush, father of Negroid races; and Put, about whom nothing more is heard in Scriptures.

That the Lord did not disavow a relationship between racial stocks is seen by the fact that Moses married a Cushite woman (Numbers 21:1). When Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of this marriage, they were severely punished with the affliction of leprosy.

Finally, whatever the significance of Noah's curse, the Lord taught us clearly that every man is to be judged on his own merits. The son is not to suffer the punishment for his father's sins: "As I live, says the Lord God . . . the soul that sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself." (Ezekiel 18:20)

That the rabbis could not even conceive of color as a significant fact in the human physiognomy is evidenced by the fact that they thought that the references to Ham as "black" was but an allusion to the dark color of the Egyptian soil. (See the Pentateuch edited by Rabbi J. H. Hertz.)

CHARGE: The Hebrews by divine command became a segregated people "and they have not only achieved the highest moral and spiritual development of all people of earth, but have made an invaluable contribution in the moral and spiritual progress of mankind . . . which would have been impossible had they abandoned the principle of segregation and become integrated with other nations . . ."

ANSWER: The institution of racial segregation has never had a place in Jewish history or religion. The injunctions against intermarriage by Moses (Deut. 7:3) and Ezra (9:10), the efforts of Abraham and Isaac to seek wives for their sons from among their own people — these were intended to maintain the religious purity of the Hebrew people. The Jews are not now and have never been a racial group, and their laws had nothing to do with social relationships between people of diverse racial backgrounds. The Hebrew leaders, rather, were fearful that emotional involvements with idolaters would seduce the Israelites from faithful service to the One True God. Thus, these laws against intermarriage were designed to protect the spiritual purity of the Jewish community, not to segregate them from other racial groups. The Hebrew people never cut themselves off entirely from meaningful intercourse with other peoples, nor did their sons cease from marrying the daughters of other ethnic or racial groups. . . .

The restrictive laws by which the Jews maintained their spiritual heritage and communicated it effectively from generation to generation did in no wise keep them from engaging in social and economic relationship or in intellectual dialogue with their non-Jewish neighbors. Jewish history records bountiful accounts of Jews and non-Jews who crossed the religious lines to establish friendships. In America we see clear evidence of this fact as Jew joins non-Jew in cooperative relationship — economic, social and cultural. Most rabbis today still counsel against interreligious marriages, as do the spiritual leaders of almost all religions. But such a stand cannot be twisted into an approval of racial segregation. . . .

CONCLUSION

We cannot demonstrate our love for our Negro brother when we forceably deny him and his white brother too an opportunity to educate their children together, to ride a bus together, to eat a meal together, to worship God together. For we harm our brother by segregating him, we wound his pride, we deny him equal opportunity, we injure him by imposing on him the subjective judgment that he is not equal, that he is not capable, that he is not as deserving, that he is not as good. I am sure the Lord makes no such judgment. "Are you not like the Ethiopians to me, O people of Israel, says the Lord." (Amos 9:7) Before God, all men are equal.

We shall enrich ourselves and our nation too as we enable all the children of God to develop themselves to their fullest capacities and to contribute together in the creation of the good and the beautiful. "In that day the Lord shall be one and his name shall be one."

SEGREGATION AND THE BIBLE

By EVERETT TILSON

This sound, reasonable study suggests answers to three questions that loom large in discussions today of the relationship of the Bible to the current racial crisis.

Does the Bible, as a few churchmen passionately contend, demand segregation? Or does it provide precedents to support segregation? And what are the implications of basic biblical faith for the Christian approach to this crucial problem in human relations?

Segregation and the Bible clearly shows the relevance of the biblical viewpoint to arguments cited both for and against segregation. It demonstrates that proof texts are a faulty method of establishing the biblical evidence—that neither segregationist nor integrationist is entitled to use the Bible to shore up his own opinions simply by using proof texts.

Only when the Bible is seen as the source of the most relevant ethical teachings about race, and only when these principles are in turn corrected in the light of Christ's purpose for man, can one find guidance in the complex maze of human relations.

Segregation and the Bible is a book to fill a deeply felt current need. Those concerned with a Christian solution to this burning issue—regardless of position—will find it enlightening and absorbing.

(The Abingdon Press)

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FILMS* AND FILMSTRIPS

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Crisis In Levittown: Black & White; 30 minutes. Available from Anti-Defamation League.

Face Of The South: Color; 29 minutes. Available from Anti-Defamation League.

No Man Is An Island: Black & White; 28 minutes. Available from Broadcasting & Film Commission, National Council of Churches, 220 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

To Live Together: Black & White; 30 minutes. Available from Anti-Defamation League.

Rumor Clinic: Filmstrip and discussion program. Available from Anti-Defamation League.

* All 16 mm, sound.

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